

# LIQUOR AND CANNABIS POLICY

## What We Heard Report



## Public notification campaign

Public feedback on the project was gathered via an online survey, which was available on the City of Burnaby’s website from September 5 to October 3, 2023. The survey and project were promoted through the City’s website, paid and organic social media, the Burnaby Beacon, a media release, CityConnect eNews and via posters in City libraries and recreation centres. Overall, 395 respondents answered the survey. Questions were primarily multiple choice, with one open-ended question where respondents could provide general comments on anything related to the policy review.

## Results

The quantitative responses to our online survey are below.

Please rate your satisfaction with being able to conveniently access <b>liquor primary establishments (pubs, clubs, lounges, etc.)</b> in Burnaby?	
VERY SATISFIED	75
SATISFIED	98
NEUTRAL	115
DISSATISFIED	59
VERY DISSATISFIED	42

Please rate your satisfaction with being able to conveniently access <b>manufacturer establishments (breweries, distilleries)</b> in Burnaby.	
VERY SATISFIED	40
SATISFIED	86
NEUTRAL	149
DISSATISFIED	68
VERY DISSATISFIED	44

Please rate your satisfaction with being able to conveniently access liquor stores in Burnaby. This includes both <b>private and government liquor stores.</b>	
VERY SATISFIED	105
SATISFIED	151
NEUTRAL	78
DISSATISFIED	28
VERY DISSATISFIED	26

Please rate your level of support for **liquor being served at establishments not typically associated with liquor service**. For example, at hair salons, spas, art galleries, etc. The City's current policy requires that these types of establishments (liquor primary establishments) go through a rezoning before they are permitted to serve alcohol.

VERY SUPPORTIVE	98
SUPPORTIVE	65
NEUTRAL	50
UNSUPPORTIVE	63
VERY UNSUPPORTIVE	112

Would you like to see **additional liquor product options** (i.e. more brands, types of liquor, etc.), in liquor stores in Burnaby?

YES	188
NO	134
NOT SURE	66

Please rate your level of support for **permitting the sale of wine in grocery stores**.

YES	188
NO	134
NOT SURE	66

Please rate your level of support for **permitting the sale of wine in grocery stores**.

VERY SUPPORTIVE	139
SUPPORTIVE	72
NEUTRAL	47
UNSUPPORTIVE	50
VERY UNSUPPORTIVE	81

Currently, only government cannabis stores are permitted in Burnaby. Please rate your level of support for **private cannabis stores** in Burnaby.

VERY SUPPORTIVE	71
SUPPORTIVE	35
NEUTRAL	30
UNSUPPORTIVE	36
VERY UNSUPPORTIVE	212

Do you think there should be a **buffer or physical separation** between **liquor stores** and potentially sensitive areas such as schools, public parks, daycares, etc.?

YES	278
NO	96
UNSURE	22

What do you believe is an **appropriate distance** between the sensitive area(s) and retail **liquor stores**? Note it takes approximately 10 minutes to travel 800 metres by walking.

100 METRES	3
200 METRES	21
500 METRES	47
800 METRES	22
MORE THAN 800 METRES	182

Do you think there should be a **buffer or physical separation** between **cannabis stores** and potentially sensitive areas such as schools, public parks, daycares, etc.?

YES	300
NO	72
UNSURE	21

What do you believe is an **appropriate distance** between the sensitive area(s) and retail **cannabis stores**? Note it takes approximately 10 minutes to travel 800 metres by walking.

100 METRES	5
200 METRES	11
500 METRES	34
800 METRES	27
MORE THAN 800 METRES	218

Which of the following apply to you? Select all that apply.

LIVE IN BURNABY	369
LIVE OUTSIDE BURNABY	15
WORK IN BURNABY	114
WORK IN THE LIQUOR AND/OR CANNABIS INDUSTRY	4
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	6
NONE OF THE ABOVE	

What best describes your age?

LESS THAN 18 YEARS	1
18-24 YEARS	5
25-34 YEARS	59
35-44 YEARS	131
45-54 YEARS	104
55-64 YEARS	49
65+	36

# Residents' comments on the Liquor & Cannabis Policy Review

Residents had the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback by answering a final question: *“Please let us know any other feedback you have about the liquor and cannabis policy review”*

Though the comments received covered a wide range of topics and concerns, a few general themes emerged:

## Theme #1 - Opposition towards cannabis in general

*“Cannabis should not be open to public.”*

*“Cannabis should either be banned or strictly controlled.”*

*“No more Cannabis stores should be allowed. It is drug, no matter soft or hard, drug is drug!”*

*“I oppose that cannabis is legal to consume and access by public.”*

*“Do not support any kind of cannabis”*

*“Cannabis should not be legal to sell anywhere in Canada. It gives young generation a wrong impression of cannabis is ok, and no harm for their health.”*

## Response

Several respondents mentioned that they oppose the legality of cannabis and do not believe it should be consumed anywhere. The proposed policy cannot address these concerns as the consumption, possession, and sale of cannabis is legal in Canada.

Burnaby currently has three government-owned retail cannabis stores. Residents of Burnaby may also visit adjacent municipalities such as Vancouver, New Westminster, Coquitlam and Port Moody to purchase cannabis products at private retail stores. Further to that, cannabis retailers often provide the option of shipping cannabis products directly to homes. The policy aims at permitting a limited number of additional retail cannabis stores, so that residents can conveniently access them closer to their neighbourhoods, should they so choose.

## Theme #2 - Concern that minors may obtain cannabis from retail cannabis stores.

*“Should ban cannabis selling in Burnaby, any product that contain cannabis should be banned. Children are too easy to have access to them, that could harm their health.”*

*“Making alcohol and cannabis so easily accessible for children and youth is not a good thing.”*

*“We should decrease the no. of cannabis stores in Burnaby to prevent our kids to access any cannabis stores.”*

## Response

In British Columbia:

- » persons must be 19 years or older to buy, consume (through smoking, vaping and all other forms of consumption), possess, or grow non-medical cannabis.
- » smoking or vaping cannabis is banned in areas where children and youth frequently hang out and play, including parks, sports fields and playgrounds
- » consumption of non-medical cannabis (in all forms) is banned on K-12 school properties and on adjacent sidewalks and boulevards
- » youth under 19 years of age are banned from entering cannabis stores and cannot work in the cannabis industry

The *Cannabis Act* helps to discourage youth cannabis use by prohibiting:

- » products that are appealing to youth
- » packaging or labelling cannabis in a way that makes it appealing to youth
- » selling cannabis through self-service displays or vending machines
- » promoting cannabis, except in narrow circumstances where young people could not see the promotion.

### Theme #3 - A dislike for smelling cannabis in public places

*“It is not acceptable that now we are subjected to open smoking of cannabis in public areas.....”*

*“I would like the city to consider bylaws that limit where individuals can smoke cannabis, especially in residential areas and public spaces.”*

*“The use of cannabis in public areas affects everyone else’s enjoyment of those spaces due to the smoke and smell.”*

*“I don’t use cannabis and don’t really like smelling it in public.”*

*“Please set up restricted area for taking cannabis. The odour of cannabis is unpleasant and secondhand smoke will bring health harm to non-smokers.”*

*“Cannabis is legal and you can smoke anywhere. I would really prefer if people were more sensitive to where they are smoking, period.”*

*“The relaxed liquor policy looks fine to me. I haven’t seen anyone drunk in open areas. Smoking and cannabis is a bigger problem because it stinks and people are forced to breath second hand smoke.”*



## Response

The *Burnaby Smoking Regulation Bylaw* prohibits smoking in many places such as City-owned lands, parks, multi-use paths, and also bike lanes, sidewalks, and other public space that abuts a property designated for commercial, assembly or institutional use. As it is difficult to enforce every infraction, an awareness campaign which highlights where smoking is and is not permitted may be the best at preventing unwanted and nuisance smoking from occurring in public places. The public can also contact City bylaw services if issues are recurring and persistent.

## Theme #4 - General Support for additional alcohol establishments and retail cannabis stores

*“We sell tobacco in grocery stores which are just as harmful as alcohol and cannabis. It’s time we became more progressive and joined the rest of Europe who are decades ahead.”*

*“Everybody has to present ID showing 19+ years to enter liquor and cannabis shops. If this is happening then it shouldn’t matter if there are schools or parks nearby because children cannot enter the shops.”*

*“Easy access (to cannabis retail stores) prevents black markets and are the smart thing to do as a city.”*

*“We should have strong enforcement against drinking and driving and other forms of criminal activity and nuisance. However, legally obtained drink or cannabis which is legally consumed by adults doesn’t need to be as tightly controlled.”*

*“As long as alcohol and cannabis are treated equally, I have no problem.”*

*“Alcohol is near schools, and gas stations that sell cigarettes are near schools. I don’t see the difference for cannabis stores. There is an age limit and covered doors/windows so I don’t think the location should be affected.”*

*“As long as there are enforcement prohibiting sales to minors, I don’t see any issues with liquor and cannabis sales....I don’t partake in cannabis so it’s not personal to me. But it’s legal and we should support tax paying businesses in Burnaby so residents can keep their money in our community.”*

*“I understand the city’s concern about proximity to liquor or cannabis stores, but it’s kind of outdated and contributes to the existing stigma around both regulated products. Is there a separation from stores that sell tobacco products? The mindset that proximity to these products will cause youth to try them is a bit archaic. Someone MUST be 19+ to purchase these items and in a cannabis store, you can’t even enter with someone under 19 years old”*

## Response

Respondents expressed that as long as there is strict enforcement to prohibit: the sale of liquor and cannabis to minors; impaired driving; and other forms of alcohol and cannabis related illegal activity, then the regulations should be relaxed. Roughly one quarter of survey respondents supported the establishment private cannabis stores in Burnaby. Reasons included: having a desire for more convenient access to retail cannabis stores; reducing the demand for black markets; supporting business in Burnaby; and eliminating the stigma around cannabis.